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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 0735

DIA FOR IR BRANCH

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, OREP, PE
SUBJ: CONVERSATIONS WITH UNITED LEFT LEADERS REVEAL DIFFERENCES
ON BASIC QUESTIONS

REF: LIMA 452 (NOTAL)

1. CONFIDENTIAL-ENTIRE TEXT.
2. DURING HIS JANUARY 9-11 VISIT HERE, ~~CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ~~ MET WITH TWO PROMINENT UNITED LEFT (87) LEADERS, IN ADDITION TO HIS SESSION WITH LIMA MAYOR ALFONSO BARRANTES (REFTEL). THEY WERE RICARDO LETTS, EDITOR OF MARXIST "DIARIO MARKA" AND SECGEN OF REVOLUTIONARY VANGUARD PARTY (PVR), AND SENATOR ENRIQUE BERNALES, SECGEN OF (NON MARXIST) REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PARTY (PSR). IN COURSE OF SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS, SOLARZ POSED A FEW OF SAME QUESTIONS TO EACH. DIFFERENCES IN THEIR ANSWERS WERE REVEALING.
3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR A MILITARY COUP IF IU WERE TO WIN 1985 ELECTIONS, LETTS SAID HE WAS VIRTUALLY CERTAIN MILITARY WOULD NOT ALLOW IU TO TAKE POWER. SOLARZ ASKED, IF THIS WERE INDEED THE CASE, WHY IU INTENDED TO CONTEST ELECTION. LETTS' FRANK RESPONSE WAS THAT PURPOSE WAS TO BUILD BIGGEST POSSIBLE SUPPRT BASE FOR ARMED INSURGENCY LEADING TO FINAL VICTORY AFTER MILITARY COUP TAKES PLACE. ASKED SAME QUESTION, BARNALES SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE ARMED FORCES WOULD INTERRUPT POLITICAL PROCESS AND ACCUSED THOSE WHO HELD THAT VIEW OF "HAVING LITTLE FAITH." HE NOTED THAT HE PERSONALLY HAD RECENTLY RECEIVED A HIGH DECORATION FROM NAVY, AND HAS TAUGHT MID LEVEL OFFICERS AT CENTER FOR ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES (CAEM). NEW CHIEF OF JOINT MILITARY COMMAND (ADMIRAL ZEVALLOS) RECEIVED BARRANTES FOR A CORDIAL CHAT JUST AFTER ASSUMING HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. BERNALES STATED.
4. SOLARZ ASKED BOTH MEN ABOUT IU'S COMMITMENT TO POLITICAL PLURALISM. LETTS STATED THAT HE WOULD FAR PREFER A MAOIST MODEL TO PRESENT SYSTEM, BUT THAT, IF IU REACHED POWER THROUGH DEMOCRATIC MEANS, PLURALIST

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STRUCTURES WOULD BE PERMITTED TO REMAIN, AT LEAST FOR SOME TIME. BERNALES, BY CONTRAST, ASSERTED THAT IU WAS COMMITTED TO POLITICAL PLURALISM, AND GAVE ASSURANCES THAT POLITICAL PARTIES, A FREE PRESS, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONAL PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY WOULD NOT BE ELIMINATED BY AN IU GOVERNMENT.

5. COMMENT: CONTRAST BETWEEN LETTS' AND BERNALES' RESPONSES TO THESE QUESTIONS ILLUSTRATES LACK OF UNITY ON BASIC PREMISES WHICH EXISTS WITHIN IU. IT ALSO MAKES CLEAR THAT IT IS PREMATURE TO OBTAIN MEANINGFUL ANSWERS TO SUCH QUESTIONS AS IU'S INTENTIONS REGARDING FUTURE OF POLITICAL PLURALISM IN PERU. ON MATTERS OF THIS KIND, EVIDENTLY, EVERY LEADER IS SPEAKING FOR HIMSELF.
OGDEN
END OF MESSAGE

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